**Introduction**

The *Máinnasheargi* research project, lead by the Giellagas Institute for Saami Studies at the University of Oulu, studies the oral tradition of Saami people living in Finland, in other words the unwritten forms of tradition of North Saami, Skolt Saami and Inari Saami.

The project aims to combine modern methods of culture studies, folklore studies, ethnomusicology and linguistics, especially perspectives of spoken language, linguistic anthropology and computer linguistics. Our research material consists of old *archive collections*, both written and audio materials, and new interviews made in the studied communities.

The project includes aspects of *repatriation* as well, since the old archive materials are made available for the communities that participated in the original documentation. Some of the topics are also selected according to the wishes made by the members of the communities. Deep understanding of local views helps us to raise topics that are specific for the studied communities but mainly ignored by outsiders.

**Present Subprojects**

*• Luhkkáračaid máinnasárbi – The Oral Tradition of the family Luhkkáräš Lukin – Montonen – Valtonen*

This subproject has two main purposes. First, to analyze with modern folkloristic and linguistic methods the *oral tradition* collected in Àtejohka or Luhkkáräški (Utsjoki, Finland) inhabited by the extended family of Luhkkáräš. The material consists of a large amount of already documented tradition and linguistic materials from 1920’s to 1970’s, but some additional new material has been collected in order to support the analysis. The analysis will mainly focus on the repertoire and the story telling contexts of a master storyteller Aslak Guttorm (Luhkkár Jovnn’Ásllat 1891–1972).

The second purpose is to return the collected materials back to the local people in a format that is easily usable and accessible for them. A selection of Aslak Guttorm stories is also chosen to be published accompanied by several research papers.

*• Máinnasheargi-corpus Rasmus – Valovirta*

The Máinnasheargi-corpus is a part of the Saami Culture Archives *Corpus of Spoken Saami Languages*. So far Máinnasheargi-corpus contains 5 hours of transcribed audio-material (27 000 words) in North Saami (SKS 1956) that has been morphologically annotated using *Giellatekno parser*. Our goal is to expand the corpus to contain stories in Inari and Skolt Saami and add syntactic analysis to the corpus.

**Linguistic perspectives on Máinnasheargi**

**Rasmus – Valovirta**

This subproject focuses on some linguistic aspects of Aslak Guttorm’s storytelling (SKS 1956). According to previous research, his speech is characterized by rich use of allegro forms, expressive words, additional comments, extraordinary word order and lively use of pronouns and particles (Huuskonen 2004; Itkonen 1971). We have chosen specific linguistic features for further study.

**Valovirta** is studying *syntactic formation* of Guttorm’s utterances, especially with regard to clause hierarchy and clause linking. The results suggest that there is significant structural variation between the stories. This variation seems to be due to many factors: plausibility, familiarity of the story, and storyteller’s attitude or stage of enthusiasm.

**Rasmus** is studying *aspectsical derivations of verbs*. In North Saami aspectual derivation modifies rather than changes verbs actual meaning and enriches language by adding information on for example duration, intensity, accomplishment and beginning of action.

Preliminary results show that aspectual derivations could reflect how motivated storyteller is to tell about different subjects: longer and richer-in-content stories tend to have more complex use of derivational suffixes. It is also noted that, for example, subitive verbs tend to be used in fast-paced dialogue.

**Sources**


**Archive Sources**

The Finnish Literature Society (SKS): SKS KRA. Saami audio material collected in 1956 (Itkonen, E. & Hautala,.).

The Finno-Ugrian Society (SUS): Litterations of SKS’s Saami audio material collected in 1956 (Aikio, S.).

The Saami Culture Archive of University of Oulu

- Luhkkáračaid máinnasárbi – Archive Collection
- The Giellagas Corpus of Spoken Saami Languages